

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3540

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION USBERLIN

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

UNCLAS STUTTGART 729

FOR POLADS

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS GW

SUBJ: BAADER-MEINHOF DEFENDANTS GET LIFE SENTENCES

REF: STUTTGART 689

1. SUMMARY: EACH OF THREE BAADER-MEINHOF DEFENDANTS HAS RECEIVED LIFE SENTENCE. SPECIFICALLY CONVICTED, AMONG OTHER THINGS, OF MURDER OF FOUR PERSONS (ALL AMERICANS). DEFENDANTS HAVE EIGHT DAYS IN WHICH TO FILE APPEALS WHICH COULD DRAG ON FOR ADDITIONAL 8-9 MONTHS. POLICE AND OTHER OFFICIALS REMAIN IN STATE OF HIGH ALERT DUE TO UNCERTAINTY OF REACTION TO ANNOUNCEMENT OF VERDICT. END SUMMARY.

2. COURT HEARING STUTTGART BAADER-MEINHOF TRIAL ANNOUNCED I
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ITS VERDICT AS ANTICIPATED ON APRIL 28. EACH OF DEFENDANTS, ANDREAS BAADER, GUNDRUN ENSSLIN AND JAN CARL RASPE, RECEIVED THREE LIFE SENTENCES, PLUS 15 YEARS. IF SENTENCES NOT OVERTURNED OR REDUCED AS RESULT OF APPEAL, EACH DEFENDANT EXPECTED TO SERVE MINIMUM OF 30-35 YEARS. BAADER, HOWEVER, ALREADY SERVING TIME AS RESULT OF EARLIER CONVICTIONS INCLUDING PRISON ESCAPE.

3. THE COURT CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO HAVE BEEN PRODUCED TO CONVICT THE DEFENDANTS OF THE MURDER OF FOUR PERSONS (AT US MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN FRANKFURT AND HEIDELBERG IN 1972), ATTEMPTED MURDER OF 34 PERSONS, NUMEROUS BREAK-INS, A VARIETY OF CRIMES INVOLVING USE OF EXPLOSIVES, AND MEMBERSHIP IN CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY.

4. DEFENSE HAS EIGHT DAYS IN WHICH TO LAUNCH APPEAL. THIS PROCESS COULD CONCEIVABLY DRAG ON FOR ADDITIONAL EIGHT OR NINE MONTHS. NATURE OF SENTENCING SUCH THAT OVERTURNING OF SOME SPECIFIC CHARGES WOULD STILL NOT MEASURABLY REDUCE AMOUNT OF TIME DEFENDANTS WOULD HAVE TO SERVE.

5. POLICE AND OTHER OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH SECURITY REMAIN IN STATE OF HIGH ALERT WHICH EXPECTED TO CONTINUE FOR NEXT FEW WEEKS. THEIR RESOURCES ALREADY OVERBURDENED AND MAIN FOCUS OF THEIR EFFORTS DEVOTED TO PROVIDING INDIVIDUAL PROTECTION. NO HARD EVIDENCE YET AVAILABLE THAT DEMONSTRATIONS OR INCIDENTS PLANNED BUT POLICE WARY OF WHAT TERRORISTS OR TERRORIST SYMPATHIZERS MIGHT DO IN RESPONSE TO ANNOUNCED SENTENCES.

6. COMMENT: ANNOUNCEMENT OF VERDICT COMES IN 24TH MONTH OF TRIAL WITH STILL MORE LEGAL MANEUVERING LOOMING ON THE HORIZON. THROUGHOUT TRIAL CHOSEN ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANTS CITED WHAT THEY CONSIDERED TO BE NUMEROUS AND SERIOUS PROCEDURAL ERRORS WHICH MAY SERVE AS BASIS FOR APPEAL.

MURPHY

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